

**Statement of Republican Leader John Shimkus
Republican Leader, Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
Joint Hearing with the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and
Commerce
June 20, 2019
CAFÉ/GHG and the SAFE Vehicle Rule**

As Prepared for Delivery

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the recognition for this opening statement.

I appreciate that you have called this hearing on this important subject. For all the bluster generated today about who's right and who's not, who cares and who doesn't, this issue goes to the very heart of who we are as a committee and where we obtain our constitutional pedigree: the interstate commerce clause and the ability to have a regular marketplace across 50 states.

We should not have a fractured marketplace driven by policies that cater to urban customers at the expense of customer need in rural areas. We also should not have policies that force consumers to pay more for the vehicles they NEED to offset the expense of high-priced vehicles others would LIKE – and get tax credits to drive. Finally, we should not have one state or a region using official actions to assert market power in a way that reverberates well outside the borders of that State.

I think we should have Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards that make sense and have the Supreme Court's mandated Clean Air Act's Greenhouse gas efforts be reasonable. They should be informed by science and not be proxies for one another when it is policy convenient from a practicality standpoint, but not so much from a legal one. We must be clear eyed about the impacts on all Americans of the policy we pass because that's what Article I of the constitution requires we do.

I, for one, have been a believer that the best way to lift fuel economy across the board without state mandates is by setting a fuel octane standard for gasoline. Last Congress, the environment subcommittee learned that the internal combustion engine will dominate the market for at least another three decades. But a significant flaw in connecting our nation's liquid fuels policy with our nation's fuel efficiency standards is that standards for Corporate Average Fuel Economy and Greenhouse Gases and the Renewable Fuel Standard have never been fully coordinated with one another -- the Renewable Fuel Standard doesn't necessarily give us the liquid fuel formulations that maximize energy efficiency, and Corporate Average Fuel Economy and Greenhouse Gas requirements don't necessarily result in the kinds of engines that make the best use of biofuel blends.

High octane fuels can improve fuel economy in engines optimized for them. For automakers, it is a relatively low-cost tool to increase miles per gallon. And because ethanol is the cheapest source of octane currently available, it also may be a pathway to use at least as much if not more ethanol than under the Renewable Fuel Standard.

We need to get the smart folks in both the car and fuel sectors together to have vehicle engines designed to squeeze out efficiencies and affordable fuels that can help them do that. Fortunately, there is research underway to better coordinate these two programs in a way that could benefit everyone from corn growers and biofuels producers, refiners, automakers, and most important of all, American consumers.

Before I yield back my time, I want to join my colleagues in welcoming our witnesses, particularly Heidi King to the committee. Heidi served on the staff here and did terrific work for our committee. I look forward to hearing from all our witnesses today, and I hope that we all will have constructive dialogues with one another that avoid political rhetoric and focus on policies that protect consumers, workers and the environment.